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*A Publication Concerned With
Natural History and Conservation*

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

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**Views expressed in Trail & Landscape are not necessarily those of the
Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club**

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

— Founded 1879 —

President

Jeff Harrison

Objectives of the Club: To promote the appreciation, preservation and conservation of Canada's natural heritage; to encourage investigation and publish the results in all fields of natural history and to diffuse the information on these fields as widely as possible; to support and co-operate with organizations engaged in preserving, maintaining or restoring environments of high quality for living things.

Club Publications: THE CANADIAN FIELD-NATURALIST, a quarterly devoted to reporting research in all fields of natural history relevant to Canada, and TRAIL & LANDSCAPE, a quarterly providing articles on the natural history of the Ottawa Valley and on club activities.

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Welcome, New Members

Ottawa Area

Ron Ashley & Susan Harcourt
Laura L. Beauprie & Family
David L. Boucher
Michel Corbeil
Wendy B. & Mark Denyes
David K. Dymont
D. Ihrig
Kimberly C. & Brent McLean
Neville Miller
Jay R. Parr
Judy G. Pelletier & Family
Jim W. Reil & Family

G. Phil Reilly
Joan M. & W. Neil Roberts
Mrs. Hilary Robertson
Stephen J. Scribner
Jennifer K. Shaw
André A. Sigouin & Family
André L. Simard
P. I. Stoddard
Cathy Ternan & Family
Drina Thompson
Jeanette M. Tramhel
Hiroe Watanabe

Other Areas

Michael Setterington
London, Ontario

January 1990

Karen Richter
Chairman
Membership Committee

Correction to "Thank You, Joyce!"

In the tribute to Joyce Reddoch on page 5 of the last issue of *Trail & Landscape* (24 (1) January – March 1990) there was an unfortunate error. Joyce joined Council in 1968, as Joyce Dunston, and the sentence reading "She was a member of Council from 1971 to 1975 (inclusive)" should be corrected to "She was a member of Council from 1968 to 1975 (inclusive)." My apology, Joyce, for this omission.

Bill Gummer

The 111th Annual Business Meeting

Bill Gummer

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Our age increases: the club's 111th Annual Business Meeting was held on January 9th, 1990, and here are some highlights from our annual report.

Publications Committee reviewed the status of *The Canadian Field-Naturalist*. Only one issue, Volume 102, Number 4, came out in 1989 because of time restrictions on the Editor and less clerical assistance than usual. We hope the journal will recover its timing during 1990. Two issues are expected to be out before April. Concerning *Trail & Landscape*, there was a change in editor at the end of Volume 23, and the club bought new desk-top publishing equipment that did not, unfortunately, work out as quickly as planned, but it is now in satisfactory operation.

The financial status of the club is good, with another increase in Members' Equity to \$114,776. Printing costs for *The Canadian Field-Naturalist* were below budget because of format changes that paid off. The club budget is slightly higher than last year's — \$16,980 compared with \$16,150; a slight loss in income (\$80) is foreseen for 1990 against a gain of \$1,670 in 1989. The difference in expenses is mostly due to costs associated with *Trail & Landscape*.

Membership Committee reported total memberships of 1,203 in 1989, versus 1,165 in 1988. New Members' Night in November, again with about 90 people present, was a success.

With the growing interest in and concern about the environment, Executive Committee will be considering what role the club can play in educational guidance in this area.

Macoun Field Club has continued to involve all committee members in leadership responsibilities and feels that it is now more active than ever. Volume 43 of *The Little Bear* was issued.

Education and Publicity Committee achieved a major recovery in 1989. The club display was on view and staffed at eight events in the city, and speakers and materials were provided to meet a number of requests.

Excursions and Lectures Committee arranged over 50 events ranging from evening walks and meetings to the four-day Point Pelee trip. The club's interest in birds remains high, accounting for 44% of the trips.

Computer Management Committee advised on equipment for *Trail & Landscape* and has improved the system used by Membership Committee for records and data reports.

Conservation Committee continues to have a broad program. Among local areas of concern are Alfred Bog, Gatineau Park, Stony Swamp, Constance Creek, Westmeath Park, Findley Creek, Britannia Park and Marlborough Forest. Comments have been made to provincial, regional and municipal authorities on the draft Ontario Wetlands Policy, the structure of conservation authorities in Ontario, and Ottawa's Official Plan review. Beginning with Volume 24 (1990) *Trail & Landscape* is carrying an insert highlighting environmental aspects and problems, both local and elsewhere.

Members who resigned from Council during or at the end of 1989 were John Sankey (January), Doreen Duchesne, Martha Aksim, Janet Gehr, Robin Collins, Ellaine Dickson, Cathy O'Keefe, Karen Richter and Austin Taverner (all in December). Don Cuddy joined Council in March. The 1990 Council is shown below. This year's six new members are shown in bold face.

The 1990 Council

President	Jeff Harrison	(230-5968)
Vice-Presidents	Roy John	(226-2019)
	Don Cuddy	(1-258-5953)
Recording Secretary	Libby Fox	(521-0769)
Corresponding Secretary	Eileen Evans	(741-0789)
Treasurer	Mick Scromeda	(231-5451)

Other Members

Ron Bedford	Colin Gaskell
Barry Bendell	Bill Gummer
Steve Blight	Paul Hamilton
Bill Cody	Elizabeth Morton
Francis Cook	Frank Pope
Don Davidson	Ken Strang
Enid Frankton	Doreen Watler
Deirdre Furlong	

A complete account of this Annual Business Meeting will appear in a future issue of the club's official journal, *The Canadian Field-Naturalist*.

OFNC Committees for 1990

Bill Gummer

The club's committees total 13, including one official subcommittee. It is always impressive to see the full list of those participating in club activities. In 1989 there were 102 names on the list, in addition to one or other of the two vice-presidents sitting on most committees. At this time in 1990 we have 98; note that members of the Bird Records Subcommittee and Nominating Committee had yet to appointed. Of the current 98 members, 19 appear more than once; this means that 79 different people are involved in committee work.

Some of these members have been "there" for years, and continued experience of this sort is very valuable to the club. At the same time it is equally important to have new blood on committees, and welcome the addition of new people every year.

Awards

Bill Gummer (596-1148)
Barbara Campbell
Enid Frankton
Peter Hall
Diana Laubitz
*Roy John

Birds

Gordon Pringle
(224-0543)
Tony Beck
Teresa Frechette
Marcie Jacklin
Bernie Ladouceur
Michelle Martin
Elizabeth Morton
Larry Niely
Daniel Perrier
Ellen Radix
Michael Runtz
Martin Taylor
Wright Smith
Daniel St Hilaire
*Don Cuddy

Bird Records Subcommittee

Michael Runtz (1-623-
6975)
Gordon Pringle (non-
voting secretary)

Computer Management

Suzanne Blain (225-2630)
Duncan Chaundy
Michael Murphy
Ken Strang
*Don Cuddy

Conservation

Don Cuddy (1-258-5953)
Suzanne Blain
Eleanor Bottomley
Doreen Duchesne
Peter Hall
Jill Jensen
Heidi Klein
Fern Levine
Lynda Maltby
Kim McLean

Michael Murphy
Joyce Reddoch
Richard Scott
Roger Taylor
Ewen Todd
Jane Topping

Education and Publicity

Deirdre Furlong
(728-4582)
Ann Blight
Tom Dent
Michael Murphy
Jane Orsack
Ken Taylor
*Roy John

Excursions and Lectures

Roy John (226-2019)
Robina Bennett
Ellaine Dickson
Eileen Evans
Libby Fox
Colin Gaskell
Edith Ikeda

Excursions & Lectures
(continued)

Rick Leavens
Philip Martin
Catherine O'Keefe
Bruce Summers

Executive

Jeff Harrison (230-5968)
Roy John
Don Cuddy
Libby Fox
Eileen Evans
Mick Scromeda

Finance

Frank Pope (829-1281)
Ron Bedford
Bill Cody
Don Davidson
Ivan Timonin
Mick Scromeda

Paul Ward
Ken Young
*Roy John

Macoun Field Club

Robin Collins (745-8094)
Barry Bendell
Co-chair (731-3306)

Martha Camfield
Ellaine Dickson
Lisa Fooks
Barbara Gaertner
Paul Hamilton
Claude Haridge
Ian Hugget
Heidi Klein
Rob Lee
Lynn Ovendon
Joan Morfitt
Patricia Whitridge
*Don Cuddy

Membership

Doreen Watler
(728-9204)
Eleanor Bottomley
Eileen Evans
Barbara Campbell
Edith Ikeda
Bette Stern
Ken Strang
Jean Sutherland
*Don Cuddy

Publications

Ron Bedford (733-8826)
Bill Cody
Francis Cook
Bill Gummer
Jim Montgomery
Elizabeth Morton
Joyce Reddoch
*Roy John

Chairmen are listed at the head of each committee with their home telephone numbers. As per Article 10 of the Constitution, one of the vice-presidents (indicated by an asterisk) has been assigned to each of the committees.

An Open Letter to the President

Dear Mr. Harrison,

According to all the articles I have read on planetary degradation, we have a very short time (10 years seems to be the accepted number) in which to take drastic action to save our planet. This means that all individuals and every level of government must participate in this activity. Locally, the politicians of the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton (RMOC) seem to be far more concerned with developers and tax base expansion than with the welfare of our natural environment and, ultimately, the well-being of our population.

In these critical years, I had expected that the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club would be far more involved in the battle to preserve the region's natural areas. However, I have been disappointed. The club's monitoring system — the information network that should be keeping a strict eye on what the region and

each of its constituent parts is doing or proposing to do to natural areas — simply isn't functioning. If it were, problems such as 1) proposed development of a regionally significant wetland, the Albion Road Wetlands (see article this issue), could have been stopped; 2) changes to the Regional plan hazard land policy allowing development if engineers say it is feasible might have been prevented; 3) the imminent destruction of the magnificent limestone escarpment at South Gloucester might have been avoided. This last development came on so rapidly, without any warning, that many plants that could have been saved will now perish. (The colony of Walking Fern was removed and now resides on my property.)

I suggest that a good RMOC monitoring system be installed immediately. If club members think that most area politicians are pro-environment, they are mistaken. The club should realize that a vigorous campaign must be waged to save our local environment.

It would appear that media coverage is the best way to reach politicians. Considering the short turn-around time required to save this planet, it's time for the club to do something dramatic. I would suggest a local environment awards night that reviews the environmental progress or destruction for a particular year. An award could be given for the most environmentally destructive local politician, company or municipality, appropriately named Planet Killer of the Year award. There should also be awards for municipalities, companies and individuals that have contributed significantly to the preservation of our local environment.

I believe this club should expend more time and energy on local environmental issues. After all, we live here, and if a great deal is not done quickly, we will have little in the way of natural areas by the end of this century.

Yours sincerely,

Albert W. Dugal
Greely, Ontario

October 30, 1989

Jeff Harrison Responds

Albert Dugal makes a number of valid points. I would like to point out, however, that our Conservation Committee has indeed worked hard over the years to preserve local and regional habitats, but a handful of volunteers can only do so much. We need more willing members to help in this important work.

In addition, at a special meeting held on February 10, 1990, which Albert Dugal attended, measures to protect local natural areas were discussed and a number of useful recommendations were made. These recommendations will be reviewed by Council and highlights of the report will be published in an upcoming issue of *Trail & Landscape*.

Thank You, F. Montgomery Brigham

The acceptance of the audited financial statement at the 111th Annual Business Meeting of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club on January 9, 1990, marked the end of an era. Monty Brigham stepped down as auditor, and I feel that this is an appropriate time to recognize his contribution to the club in this capacity.

Most members know Monty in other capacities — family man, professional accountant, sign language translator for the deaf, popular radio and TV guest commentator on birding, speaker at club lectures, leader of club excursions, producer of bird song records and tapes, and participant in Christmas and other bird counts. This note, however, is about Monty in his role as auditor, treasurer and designer of the club's accounting system.

The Council of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club is responsible for managing a significant amount of money. The financial statements for the year ending September 30, 1989, indicate income of \$104,161, of which *The Canadian Field-Naturalist* accounted for \$87,945 and other club activities for \$16,216. In the 1960s, Monty recognized the need for a more professional approach to the management of club funds, and he applied himself to doing something about it. As chairman of the Finance Committee, I can testify that he served us well.

Reviewing my collection of back issues of *The Canadian Field-Naturalist*, I find Monty listed as treasurer for three years beginning in 1969. For the next three years his name appears as auditor. Then, in 1980 and up to 1989, he reappears as auditor. That makes thirteen years as auditor and three years as treasurer, but I understand that in other years he was busy drawing up financial statements, advising on accounting problems, and monitoring the accounts.

Although Monty's contribution to the account keeping has been less spectacular than his other activities, it has been no less valuable to the club. I am pleased to report that the 111th Annual Business Meeting gave Monty a hearty vote of thanks.

*Frank Pope,
Chairman,
Finance Committee*

The Horned Pondweed (*Zannichellia palustris*) in the Ottawa District

Daniel F. Brunton
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K2B 8A8

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The Horned Pondweed (*Zannichellia palustris* L.; Zannichelliaceae) is an obscure, delicate and fine-leaved aquatic plant. It is found across the Northern Hemisphere, usually in quiet, brackish water along seashores (Hulten 1968). Its distinctive crescent-shaped seeds (achenes) are produced in small groups at the nodes along the stem (Figure 1). The seeds distinguish it from the fine-leaved members of the large group of true pondweeds (*Potamogeton*), which it closely resembles. Indeed, some authors place it in the same family with the other pondweeds (in Najadaceae or Zosteraceae) (Fassett 1972; Scoggan 1978). Despite its maritime distribution it also occurs regularly in interior North America (Riley and McKay 1980; Fassett 1972). There it is usually found in shallow water of salty sloughs, quiet river backwaters over clay or in shallow, polluted streams.

Zannichellia is common along the shores of southern Hudson Bay and James Bay and along the maritime coast of southern Quebec; it is local inland in Quebec and Ontario along the St. Lawrence River (Riley and McKay 1980). In southern Ontario it is found in quiet, shallow water along the Great Lakes shores and at a few scattered localities away from these large water bodies. No records for this species in the Ottawa District or Ottawa Valley could be found in a review of the appropriate botanical literature (Scoggan 1978; Riley and McKay 1980; Gillett and White 1978; Moore 1972). The discovery of a large population of *Zannichellia palustris* at Ottawa Beach, Andrew Haydon Park, Nepean, in August 1987 (Brunton 1987; 4 August 1987; DAO, TRT, CAN, MICH, DFB), therefore, appeared to constitute the first record for this area (herbarium acronyms follow Boivin (1980)).

The Horned Pondweed at Ottawa Beach was found in very shallow, quiet water over clay and silty sand 50 to 75 m out from the shore of the Ottawa River. During the course of our studies of emergent aquatic flora along the Ottawa River in 1987 (Brunton and Di Labio, *in press*) we found additional large populations. These were upstream on both sides of Stillwater Park, Nepean (Di Labio s.n.; 19 August 1987; DAO, DFB, TRT), and downstream near the Britannia Pier,

Ottawa (Di Labio s.n. ; 19 August 1987; DAO, CAN, TRT). We were unable to locate other stations at any of our 23 study sites (Brunton and Di Labio, *in press*).

When we undertook a herbarium search for *Zannichellia*, however, two previous collections from the Ottawa District came to light (both at DAO). One was a specimen collected 28 August 1982 along the Ottawa River by P. M. Catling and S. Darbyshire at Ottawa Beach. The other was an older collection made on 30 August 1973 along the Rideau River by L. G. Bailey and M. Vanderfleet at the Brewer Park swimming area near Carleton University. So, Horned Pondweed has actually been known from the Ottawa District for just over 15 years.



Figure 1: Wispy, delicate plants of Horned Pondweed (*Zannichellia palustris*) in shallow water of the Ottawa River west of the Britannia Pier, Ottawa. Note the cluster of tiny seeds (arrow) at the stem node. The vertical bar equals 1 cm.

It is impossible to be categorical about the origins of Ottawa Valley populations of *Zannichellia*, but inadvertent transportation by waterfowl seems a likely bet. The Ottawa Beach site has long been known as an important staging and feeding area for shorebirds, ducks and geese migrating between James Bay and the Atlantic coast (Dickson 1981).

As mentioned previously, these are two areas where *Zannichellia* is common in similar habitats. The jagged edges of the achene would likely assist entanglement in the feathers of a bird. As well, the wispy, delicate nature of the plant

causes it to collapse, wrapping tightly around any support (such as a bird's leg?) when lifted from the water. It is not difficult to imagine a whole plant and/or many seeds "hitch-hiking" hundreds of kilometres in this way.

It is possible, too, that *Zannichellia* was common along the brackish shores of the Champlain Sea, which covered much of the Ottawa District about 10,000 years ago. The seashore environment was similar to areas where *Zannichellia* is common today (cf. Harington 1971). Are the Ottawa Valley populations relicts, perhaps, of those prehistoric times? However it got to be here, *Zannichellia palustris* likely became well established very quickly. Voss (1972) relates how a plant grown from one seed produced over 2.5 million seeds in only six months!

The Horned Pondweed is certainly an obscure plant and one that we may have overlooked at other sites in the Ottawa Valley. Without the exceptionally low water levels of 1987 we would likely not have found so much of it in the Stillwater Creek to Britannia area. Horned Pondweed is a delightfully curious addition to the Ottawa Valley aquatic flora.

Acknowledgements: Our thanks to the curators of the DAO and CAN herbaria for access to the collections in their care and to P. M. Catling for information concerning his 1982 specimen.

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More on Sea-spurry (*Spergularia* spp.) in the Ottawa District

Daniel F. Brunton
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Ottawa, Ontario
K2B 8A8

Three years ago an article appeared in *Trail & Landscape* stating that two species of Sea-spurry (*Spergularia*: Caryophyllaceae) occurred sparingly in the Ottawa District (Darbyshire 1987). Both are aliens here and grow well in halophytic conditions. They usually form dense patches of small (under 15 cm) fleshy, many-branched plants covered in delicate pink or lavender flowers. In the course of investigating such habitats over the last five to ten years I have gathered records and information on *Spergularia* in the Ottawa District which offer a broader perspective on this attractive little wildflower, and this note is intended to document that picture.

Lesser Sea-spurry (*Spergularia marina* (L.) Griseb.)

A common plant of maritime coastlines and, to a lesser degree, along salty slough margins in the prairies of western North America (Looman and Best 1979), *S. marina* is rare in Ontario. In this province it is found rarely on the coast of James Bay (Riley and McKay 1980), and Catling and McKay (1980) list only a handful of sites for it in southern Ontario, all introductions discovered since 1970 in salty, roadside ditches, in a salt depot or a snow dump. Darbyshire (1987) cites their collection from the median of the Queensway between Pinecrest Road and Woodroffe Avenue and a more recent (1984) collection from a snow dump near Albion Road (Zgierska 1985). He warns (correctly) that access to the Queensway site is hazardous and that this may explain why no recent collections have been made from there.

Actually, *S. marina* is common at Queensway interchanges from Nepean (Moodie Drive, 3 August 1978; D. F. Brunton 7497; DAO, TRT, DFB) (herbarium acronyms follow Boivin (1980)) to the west end of Ottawa (Maitland Avenue, 18 June 1987; D. F. Brunton 7373; TRT, DFB). It can be observed safely by walking along the wet ditches at access lanes that run to and from the highway at the Moodie, Pinecrest, Woodroffe and Maitland interchanges. (You can see even more by driving in the "fast" lane of this stretch of road during rush hour; there is plenty of opportunity to watch the central median while creeping along at walking speed!)

The *Spergularia* grows here with typical salt-loving plants such as Salt-marsh Grass (*Puccinellia distans*), Compressed Rush (*Juncus compressus*), Foxtail Grass (*Hordeum jubatum*) (see Brunton 1985a; Brunton 1985b) and Marsh Dandelion (*Taraxacum palustre*) (Brunton 1989). It forms large mats, often extending for 10 m or more at a time. In full flower (by early June) it presents an attractive lavender bloom across otherwise dull and darkly coloured sites.

An even safer place at which to observe *S. marina* is along the Ottawa River Parkway. Enid Frankton (personal communication) found a robust patch near the Lincoln Heights transitway in July 1987. Karen McIntosh and I subsequently found large stands growing in the Parkway median 500 m east of Woodroffe Avenue (Brunton & McIntosh 7494; 2 August 1987; DAO, TRT). Scattered patches extend westward for over a kilometre to the transitway station. It is found in even larger numbers in patches along the central median of the Parkway eastward almost to the Champlain Bridge. A large population grows on the side of the National Capital Commission bicycle path by the outer edge of the Parkway underpass just west of Woodroffe Avenue. The seed to establish this stand undoubtedly fell from the roadway above.

Greater Sea-spurry (*Spergularia marginata* (DC.) Kittel)

Darbyshire (1987) refers to this European species as *S. media*, a name placed in synonymy under *S. marginata* by European authorities (Clapham et al. 1987). It has been known in eastern North America for less than a century and only from New York and Michigan until recent years (Catling and McKay 1980; Voss 1985). It has spread rapidly along wet salty ditches of major highways in southwestern Ontario (Catling and McKay 1980), presumably from the Michigan and/or New York populations. This is the distribution pattern seen with introduced plants with halophytic tendencies such as the Slender Sedge (*Carex praegracilis*) (Brunton and Catling 1982) and Compressed Rush (Stuckey 1981). The report in Darbyshire (1987) constitutes the first (and to date, only) record of this species for the Ottawa District (cf. Gillett and White 1978).

A good identification feature is the flower structure. Not only are the sepals of *S. marginata* long (over 4 mm — as noted in Darbyshire (1987)), but the petals are of equal or greater length. In *S. marina* the petals are half to two-thirds the length of the sepals and have a more deeply pinkish-blue colour (personal observation; Clapham et al. 1987). The other features cited by Darbyshire (1987) are consistent.

This plant is very similar to the more common *S. marina* and could easily be overlooked. It is typically larger than *S. marina*, however, and is perennial, developing from a stout rootstalk (Clapham et al. 1987). *Spergularia marina* is reported to be an annual (Looman and Best 1979; Clapham et al. 1987), developing from a slender taproot. This may not be reliable, however, as Catling and McKay (1980) report apparently perennial plants at Toronto. Many of those along the Queensway near Pinecrest Road also seem to be perennial (personal observation).

These two attractive little weeds are interesting additions to the growing list of salt-tolerant plants in the Ottawa District. Either species can be expected anywhere in the Ottawa District where dissolved road salt accumulates in wet sites exposed to heavy vehicular (especially truck and bus) traffic. Although *S. marginata* is the more common of the two species in southern Ontario, *S. marina* was the first to be found here and it remains locally more common. It would be useful to document additional locations for *Spergularia* in the Ottawa District by depositing a specimen in the Agriculture Canada (DAO) herbarium or the Canadian Museum of Nature (formerly the National Museum of Natural Sciences) (CAN) herbarium. In this way we will be able to monitor the spread and changing status of both species.

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Ruby-Crown

I shared my breakfast
with a kinglet
it being spring
this feather of a bird
enjoying the same morning air
perilously small
flitted energetically
along a bough
beneath pendant
golden birch catkins
as I chomped my
fibrous cereal
it seized a tidbit
some insect egg or spider
almost at arm's length
and I recalled how
at a conference
many years ago
a young ornithologist
showed a film taken at
a kinglet's nest
at ninety-five feet
at the top of a great spruce
it took a tall tower
and a determined youth . . .
I thought how marvellous
are birds
and men.

Robert W. Nero

Albion Road Wetlands Part 1

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The Albion Road Wetlands is a complex wetland ecosystem, which is threatened by development, in the city of Gloucester. This is the first of a multi-part article undertaken a) to describe the wetlands and its component plant communities, b) to list the significant plant species (algae, lichens, bryophytes and vascular plants), and c) to evaluate and compare this wetland with others in the Ottawa District. The adjoining peatlands to the north, of which the wetlands is part, will also be examined and evaluated. We hope this study will result in protection of the area.

Part 1 presents an overview of the wetlands and concentrates on what is known of the private lands east of Albion Road and south of Leitrim Road. I will discuss two of the better known plant communities and in the discussion I will give a preliminary evaluation of the significance of the wetlands as well as summarize the threat posed by development to the wetlands and the steps taken to save the wetlands.

The Albion Road Wetlands is situated along Albion Road in the city of Gloucester at the southeast corner of Ottawa International Airport (Figure 1). It is the southern part of a C-shaped peatland containing the headwaters of Sawmill Creek and Findley Creek (Figure 2). According to Belden's *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of Carleton*, in 1879 this peatland covered at least 700 hectares and was quite wet. Subsequent land clearing and various drainage schemes (Figure 3) undertaken to bring the rich organic soil into agricultural use dramatically altered much of the northern and central parts of the peatland. As farming declined, the abandoned fields reverted to woodland, a process that continues today. Several parcels of land were reforested by the National Capital Commission following acquisition for the Greenbelt. The southern part, now encompassing the Albion Road Wetlands, was the least modified by human activity.

The wetland probably dates back several thousand years to some time after the retreat of the Champlain Sea. It most likely had a dual development — part originating as an infilling of a small freshwater lake and the remainder developing on gently sloping ground fed by water emerging from gravelly highlands to the south (over limestone bedrock) and from runoff streams from the northwest. Protection of the natural flow of water is critical to this wetland's survival (Figure 4).

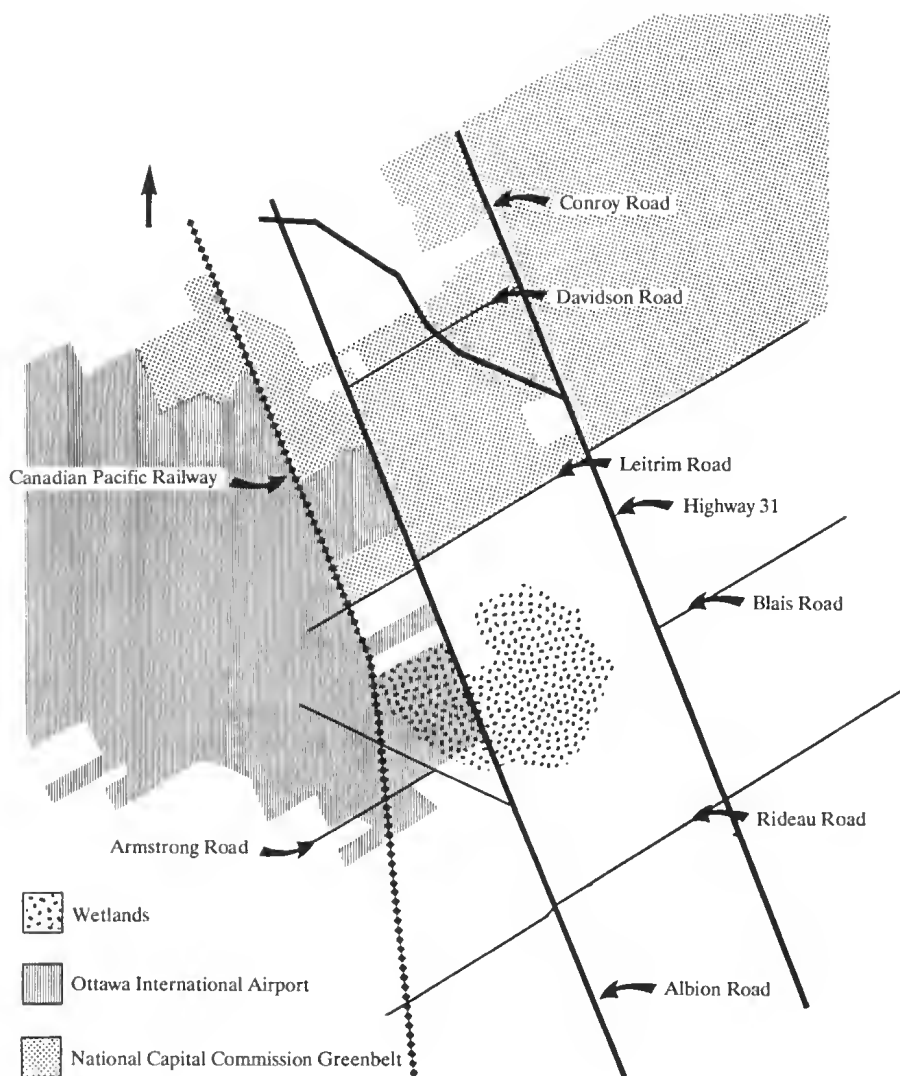


Figure 1. Location of the Albion Road Wetlands.

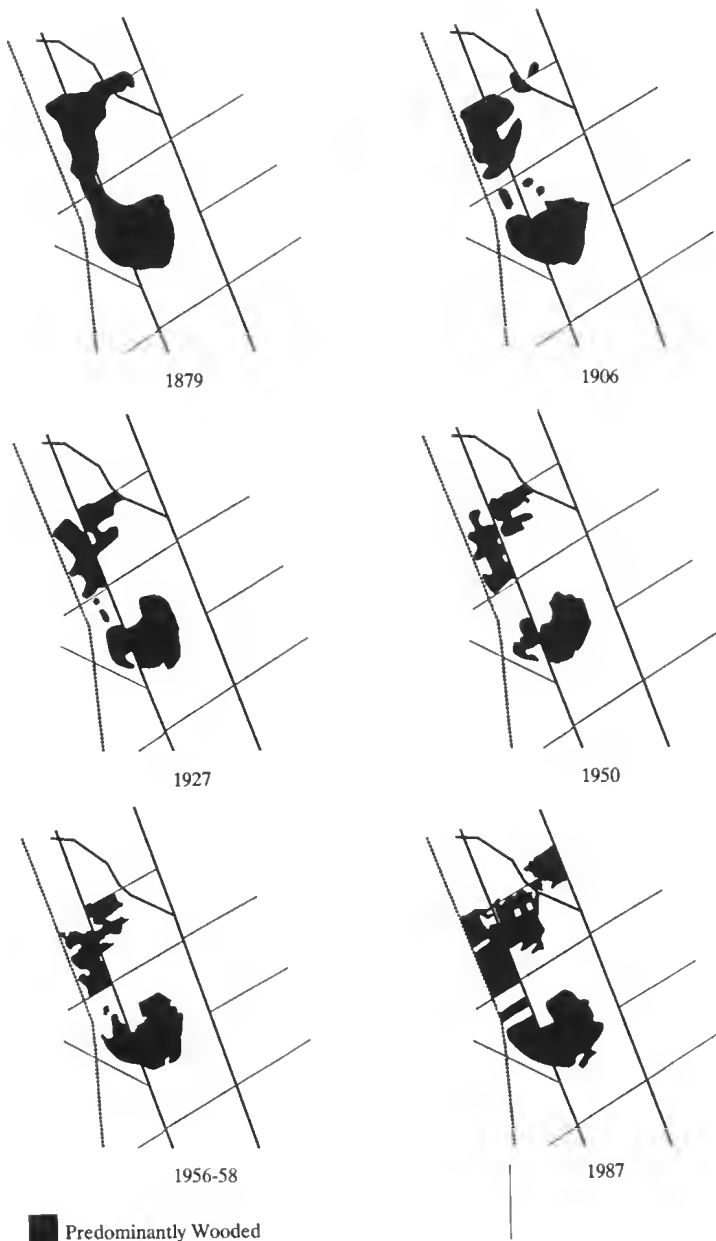


Figure 2. The Albion Road Wetlands from 1879 to 1987. Based on 1 : 50,000 topographic maps of Ottawa (31G/5) and Belden's *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of Carleton*, 1879.

The Albion Road Wetlands straddles Albion Road. Most of the land on the west side of the road is part of the airport lands, while that on the east is privately owned.

THE PRIVATE LANDS EAST OF ALBION ROAD

Covering approximately 225 hectares (556 acres), these lands are underlain by a layer of peat ranging in thickness from less than 0.5 m to at least 2 m. Much of the terrain is wooded and is traversed by at least four small streams, which flow all year long and feed Findley Creek. This waterway is a branch of the North Castor River, which is part of the South Nation River watershed.

Notwithstanding a low elevation, the area is uneven, dropping about 4.5 m from west to east and approximately 6 m from south to north. The underlying peat acts like a giant sponge and dam, storing enormous quantities of water. A new drainage ditch, pushed through the northern third of this section about two years ago, proves this point. Although the ditch was dug to the visible peat base and is, in places, nearly 2 m deep, little water flows through it, in direct contrast to the vast quantities of moisture retained by the surrounding organic sediments. Most of the water springs from the western third of the ditch, and, during the late summer drought of 1989, appeared to be diminishing as it travelled through the wetland.

Marl, a clay-like material resulting from the precipitation of calcium carbonate in lake water, was discovered at the bottom of the ditch in the wetland's fen area. An abundance of small white shells intermixed with this deposit also illustrates the lacustrine environment. The actual extent of the old lake is uncertain, as is the depth of marl. Whether or not the marl is interlayered with peat as in the Stoco fen (Vreeken 1981) is also not known.

A variety of woodland communities, willow thickets, marshy areas, old fields and a fen make up this intricate peatland. Much of this land has been lumbered; the most recent cutting appears to have occurred about 30 years ago (excluding those trees cleared for the new ditch about two years ago).

A great deal of this area remains to be explored. In 1984, several botanical excursions yielded 38 significant plant species, the discovery of various woodland communities, including a virgin cedar stand, and the realization that this wetland was regionally significant. More extensive investigations began in 1989 when the City of Gloucester's proposed development plan was made public.

During the summer and fall of 1989, I undertook many botanical excursions into the wetlands with members of the Botany Division, National Museum of Natural Sciences (R. R. Ireland, L. M. Ley, P. Y. Wong and P. Hamilton), as well as Joyce Reddoch, our expert on local peatlands, Martha Camfield, and other naturalists. Unexpected botanical findings included three new records of vascular plants for the Ottawa District, one of which, Marsh Valerian (*Valeriana sitchensis* ssp. *uliginosa*) (Figure 5), is provincially rare. Marsh Valerian is rare

Table 1. Significant vascular plants, lichens, bryophytes and algae in the Albion Road Wetlands (based on collections and identifications made by members of the Botany Division, National Museum of Natural Sciences).

Vascular Plants New to the Ottawa District

<i>Triglochin palustris</i>	Arrow Grass
<i>Zygadenus glaucus</i>	White Camas
<i>Valeriana sitchensis</i> ssp. <i>uliginosa</i>	Marsh Valerian

Lichens New to Ottawa-Carleton

<i>Micarea peliocarpa</i>	<i>Multiclavula mucida</i>
<i>Mycocalicium subtile</i>	<i>Rinodina efflorescens</i>
<i>Lecanactis chloroconia</i>	Gyalectaceae
<i>Arthonia byssacea</i>	

Bryophytes (Mosses and Liverworts) New to Ottawa-Carleton

<i>Moerckia hibernica</i>	<i>Cephaloziella rubella</i>
<i>Mylia anomala</i>	<i>Calliergon richardsonii</i> (rare in
<i>Riccardia multifida</i>	southern Ontario)

Other Significant Lichens

<i>Anisomeridium nyssaegenum</i>	<i>Strigula stigmatella</i>
<i>Micarea prasina</i>	

Other Significant Bryophytes

<i>Rhizomnium pseudopunctatum</i>	<i>Campylium stellatum</i>
<i>Sphagnum warnstorffii</i>	

Table 1. Significant vascular plants, lichens, bryophytes and algae in the Albion Road Wetlands (continued).

Other Significant Vascular Plants

(based on Gillett and White's *Checklist of Vascular Plants of the Ottawa-Hull Region, Canada*).

Rare

<i>Carex limosa</i>	Mud Sedge
<i>Carex livida</i>	Lead-coloured Sedge
<i>Carex prairea</i>	Prairie Sedge
<i>Eleocharis elliptica</i>	Elliptic Spike-rush
<i>Streptopus amplexifolius</i>	Twisted Stalk
* <i>Rumex maritimus</i>	Golden Dock
<i>Geum laciniatum</i>	Slashed Avens
<i>Galium labradoricum</i>	Bog Bedstraw
<i>Galium tinctorium</i>	Dyer's Bedstraw
<i>Lonicera villosa</i>	Northern Honeysuckle
<i>Aster acuminatus</i>	Whorled Wood Aster
* <i>Crepis tectorum</i>	Hawk's-beard

Sparse

<i>Adiantum pedatum</i>	Maidenhair Fern
<i>Dryopteris clintoniana</i>	Clinton's Fern
<i>Dryopteris x dowellii</i>	a hybrid Wood Fern
<i>Cinna latifolia</i>	Drooping Woodreed
<i>Muhlenbergia glomerata</i>	Agglomerated Muhlenbergia
<i>Carex echinata</i>	Prickly Sedge
<i>Carex trisperma</i>	Three-fruited Sedge
<i>Cladium mariscoides</i>	Twig-rush
<i>Eriophorum viridi-carinatum</i>	Green Cotton Grass
<i>Rhynchospora alba</i>	White Beak-rush
<i>Scirpus hudsonianus</i>	Hudsonian Club-rush
<i>Trillium cernuum</i>	Nodding Trillium
<i>Malaxis monophyllos</i>	White Adder's-mouth
<i>Platanthera obtusata</i>	Blunt-leaved Orchid
<i>Spiranthes romanzoffiana</i>	Hooded Ladies-tresses
<i>Salix candida</i>	Hoary Willow
<i>Stellaria calycantha</i>	Northern Starwort
<i>Ribes triste</i>	Wild Currant
<i>Sorbus americana</i>	American Mountain-ash
* <i>Euphorbia helioscopia</i>	Sun Spurge
<i>Viola incognita</i>	Large-leaved White Violet

Table 1. Significant vascular plants, lichens, bryophytes and algae in the Albion Road Wetlands (continued).

<i>Epilobium coloratum</i>	Purple-leaved Willow-herb
<i>Epilobium leptophyllum</i>	Narrow-leaved Willow-herb
<i>Orthilia secunda</i>	One-sided Pyrola
<i>Agalinis tenuifolia</i>	Slender Gerardia
<i>Linnaea borealis</i>	Twinflower
<i>Lonicera oblongifolia</i>	Swamp Fly-honeysuckle
<i>Aster umbellatus</i>	Umbellate Aster
<i>Aster borealis (junciformis)</i>	Rush Aster
<i>Bidens tripartita</i>	Beggarticks
<i>Gnaphalium obtusifolium</i>	Sweet Everlasting
* <i>Helianthus annuus</i>	Common Sunflower
* <i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	Annual Sow Thistle
* <i>Tussilago farfara</i>	Colts-foot

Locally Common

(common in the habitat, but the habitat is sparse to rare)

<i>Picea mariana</i>	Black Spruce
<i>Smilacina trifolia</i>	Three-leaved False Solomon's Seal
<i>Cypripedium reginae</i>	Showy Lady-slipper
<i>Calopogon tuberosus</i>	Grass Pink
<i>Sarracenia purpurea</i>	Pitcher-plant
<i>Andromeda glaucophylla</i>	Bog Rosemary
<i>Kalmia angustifolia</i>	Sheep Laurel
<i>Ledum groenlandicum</i>	Labrador Tea
<i>Vaccinium corymbosum</i>	High Bush Blueberry
<i>Vaccinium oxycoccos</i>	Small Cranberry
<i>Menyanthes trifoliata</i>	Buckbean

Uncommon

<i>Lycopodium annotinum</i>	Bristly Clubmoss
<i>Botrychium simplex</i>	Dwarf Grape Fern
<i>Athyrium thelypteroides</i>	Silvery Spleenwort
<i>Dryopteris cristata</i>	Crested Wood Fern
<i>Dryopteris x boottii</i>	a hybrid Wood Fern
<i>Dryopteris x triploidea</i>	a hybrid Wood Fern
<i>Taxus canadensis</i>	Canada Yew
<i>Agrostis scabra</i>	Tickle Grass
<i>Bromus ciliatus</i>	Fringed Brome Grass
<i>Muhlenbergia mexicana</i>	Mexican Muhlenbergia
<i>Carex disperma</i>	Two-seeded Sedge
<i>Carex hystericina</i>	Porcupine Sedge
<i>Carex stricta</i>	Stiff Sedge
<i>Medeola virginiana</i>	Indian Cucumber-root

Table 1. Significant vascular plants, lichens, bryophytes and algae in the Albion Road Wetlands (continued).

<i>Cypripedium calceolus</i>	Yellow Lady-slipper
<i>Malaxis unifolia</i>	Green Adder's-mouth
<i>Populus deltoides</i>	Cottonwood
<i>Salix serissima</i>	Autumn Willow
<i>Betula populifolia</i>	Gray Birch
<i>Boehmeria cylindrica</i>	False Nettle
<i>Polygonum convolvulus</i>	Black Bindweed
<i>Rumex orbiculatus</i>	Great Water Dock
<i>Chenopodium capitatum</i>	Strawberry-blite
<i>Ranunculus scleratus</i>	Cursed Crowfoot
<i>Ribes lacustre</i>	Swamp Currant
<i>Amelanchier humilis</i>	Shadbush
<i>Fragaria vesca</i>	Wood Strawberry
<i>Geum canadense</i>	White Avens
<i>Callitriche verna</i>	Common Water-starwort
<i>Circaea alpina</i>	Alpine Enchanter's Nightshade
<i>Aralia racemosa</i>	Spikenard
<i>Moneses uniflora</i>	One-flowered Wintergreen
<i>Gaultheria hispidula</i>	Creeping Snowberry
<i>Pyrola asarifolia</i>	Pink Pyrola
<i>Gaylussacia baccata</i>	Huckleberry
<i>Lysimachia thyrsiflora</i>	Tufted Loosestrife
<i>Chelone glabra</i>	Turtlehead
<i>Galium trifidum</i>	Small Bedstraw
<i>Sambucus canadensis</i>	Common Elder
<i>Lonicera dioica</i>	Wild Honeysuckle
<i>Viburnum trilobum</i>	Highbush-cranberry
<i>Bidens vulgata</i>	Tall Beggar-ticks
<i>Erechtites hieracifolia</i>	Pilewort
<i>Gnaphalium uliginosum</i>	Low Cudweed
<i>Lactuca biennis</i>	Blue Lettuce
<i>Solidago uliginosa</i>	Bog Goldenrod

Significant Algae

Rare

<i>Achnanthes delicatula</i>	<i>Diploneis smithii</i>
<i>Achnanthes microcephala</i>	<i>Frustulia rhomboides</i>
<i>Cyclotella meneghiniana</i>	<i>Neidium iridis</i>
<i>Synedra capitata</i>	<i>Neidium pfitzer</i>
<i>Cymbella aspera</i>	<i>Pinnularia gibba</i>
<i>Brachysira vitrea</i>	

*Naturalized or adventive

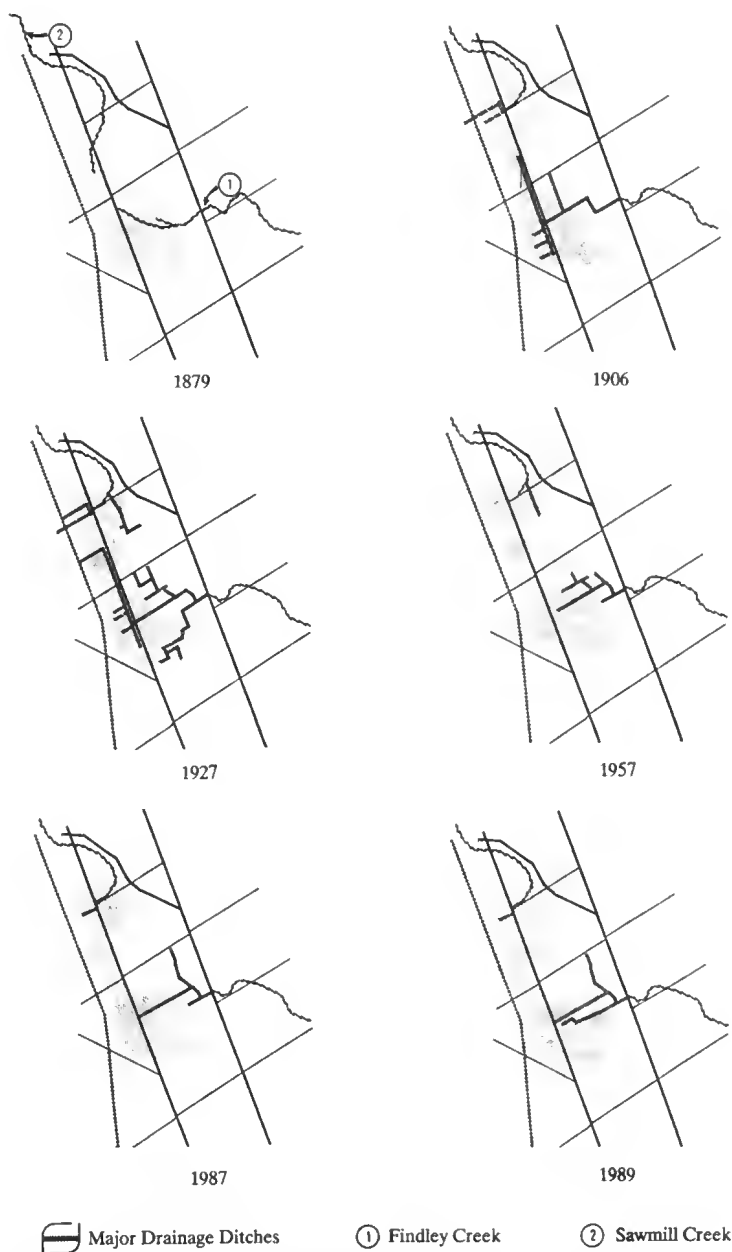


Figure 3. Drainage ditches in the Albion Road Wetlands area from 1879 to 1989. Based on 1 : 50,000 topographic maps of Ottawa (31G/5), Belden's *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of Carleton*, 1879, and personal observations for the 1989 version.

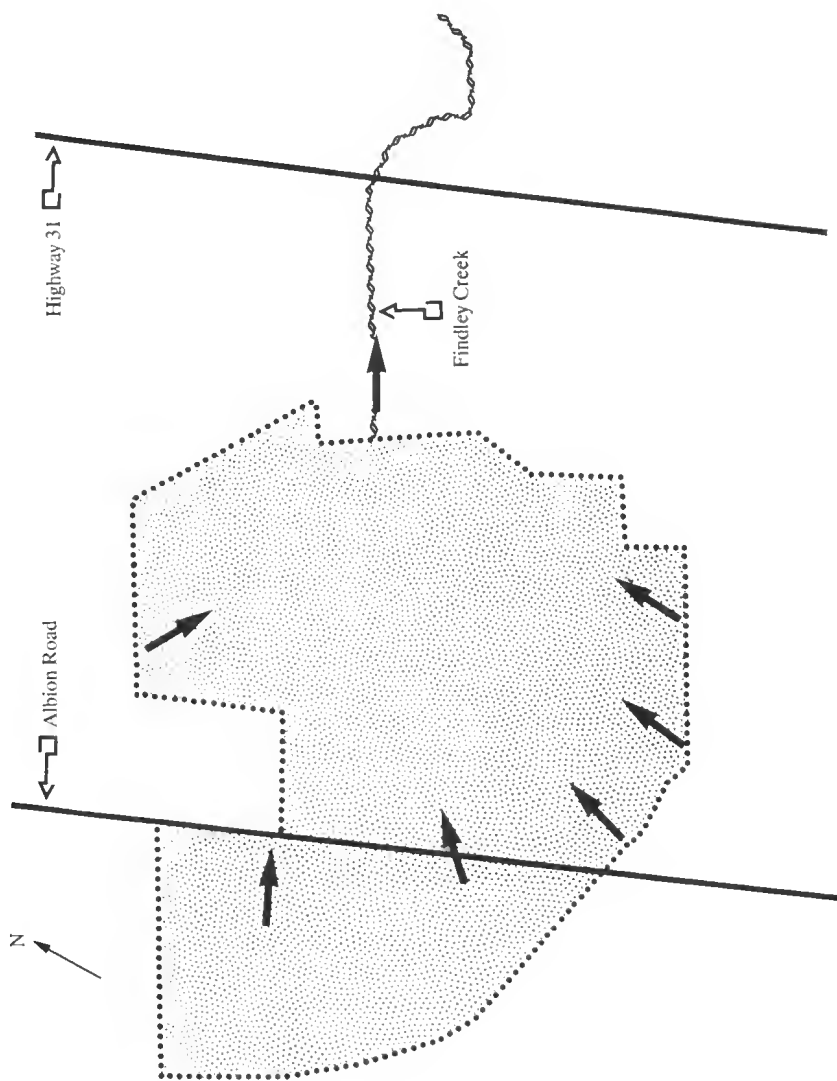


Figure 4. Basic waterflow in the wetlands.

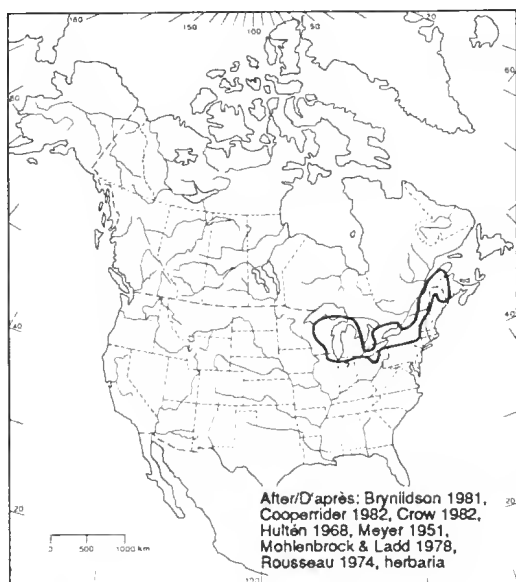


Figure 5. Distribution of Marsh Valerian (*Valeriana sitchensis* ssp. *uliginosa*) from Argus et al. (1987).

not only in Ontario but also, according to Argus et al. (1987), in Quebec: "Possibly extirpated in Ohio; endangered in Illinois, Indiana, New Hampshire, and Vermont; threatened in New York and Wisconsin; rare in Maine." We also discovered seven new lichens and five new bryophytes for Ottawa-Carleton (Table 1). By the end of the 1989 collecting season, the number of significant plants had expanded from 38 to 135 (Table 1). Since much of the area remains to be studied on a spring – fall seasonal basis, I expect the number of significant plants to be augmented by at least 30 species.

This wetland supports a variety of animals including insects, fishes, amphibians, birds and mammals. Tracks, droppings and shed antlers attest to the presence of deer in several of the plant communities. If the plant component is any indication, a thorough zoological inventory may prove exceptionally interesting.

Plant Communities of the Private Lands East of Albion Road

This part of the wetland is a mosaic of numerous plant communities: old fields, marshy areas, fen and fen lenses (small, lens-shaped patches of fen), willow thickets, coniferous woodlands, hardwood stands and mixed woods (Figure 6). The woodland components exhibit varied age structures ranging from approximately 30 to over 200 years. Descriptions of the fen and the ancient cedar woods follow.

The Fen

Marl sediments below the peat layer indicate that the fen evolved from the infilling of a small calcareous freshwater lake. The peat stratum (1.5 to 2 m in thickness) possesses excellent moisture-retention qualities. The water level of this infilled fen is at the surface or above in the spring, fall and winter and near or at the surface during the summer, based on the colour in aerial photographs taken in June 1983, long before construction of the new drainage ditch now bisecting the fen began (Figure 7). At that time, a very shallow stream, 2.5 to

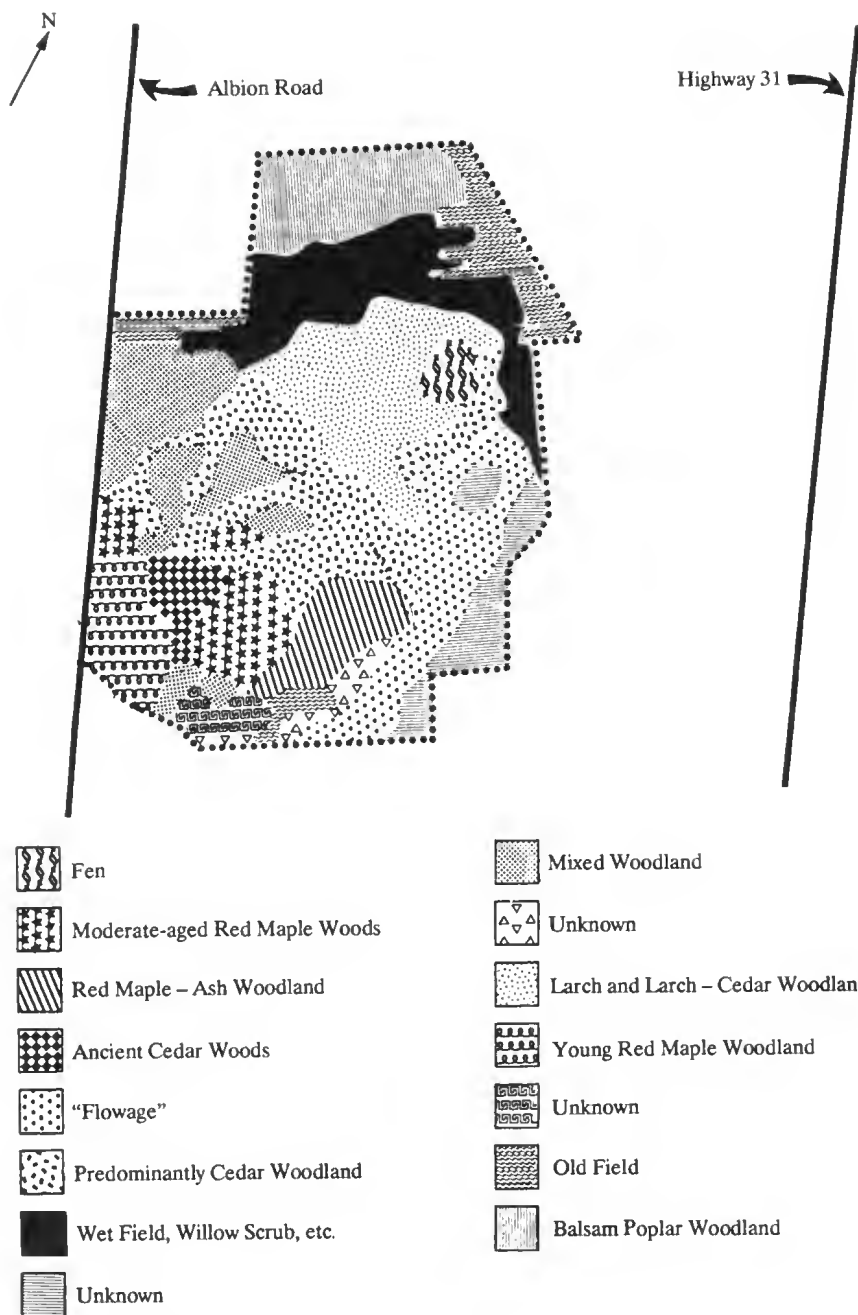


Figure 6. Plant communities of the private lands east of Albion Road. (Based on field studies and on a 1983 colour aerial photograph.)

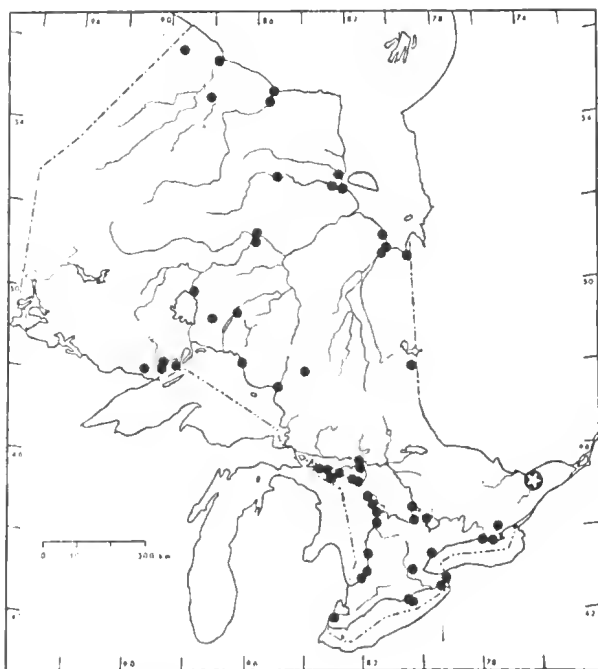


Figure 7. Linda M. Ley standing on the bank of the new drainage ditch where it enters the fen.

3 m wide, meandered through the centre. Although flooded areas occupied parts of the fen, most exhibited the same water regime as adjacent low-lying fields (i.e. water at or close to the soil surface).

In September 1989 the fen appeared dry — a result of the prolonged summer drought. But moist peat was just beneath the surface. The ditch, albeit nearly 2 m deep in places and displacing most of the stream, seems to have had a minimal effect on the vegetation. This drainage channel, however, enables us to determine peat depth, the underlying substrate, and the water-retention capacity of the organic sediments; it also provides a convenient, time-saving route through the northern third of the wetlands. The unsightly channel could easily be refilled and returned to nature.

The fen's small size (approximately 7 hectares) belies its botanical value. So far, we have discovered 36 significant species of vascular plants as well as three species new to the Ottawa District. More can be expected from this area, as it was explored only in September 1989. Although this community contains many plants found in calcareous fens of the Ottawa District (Reddoch 1989), it is unusual. The Marsh Valerian, White Camas (*Zygadenus glaucus*) and Arrow Grass (*Triglochin palustris*) are not only new to the Ottawa District but also disjunct from their populations in Ontario (Figures 8a, 8b and 8c). Several plants rare in the Ottawa District and previously unobserved in local fens are



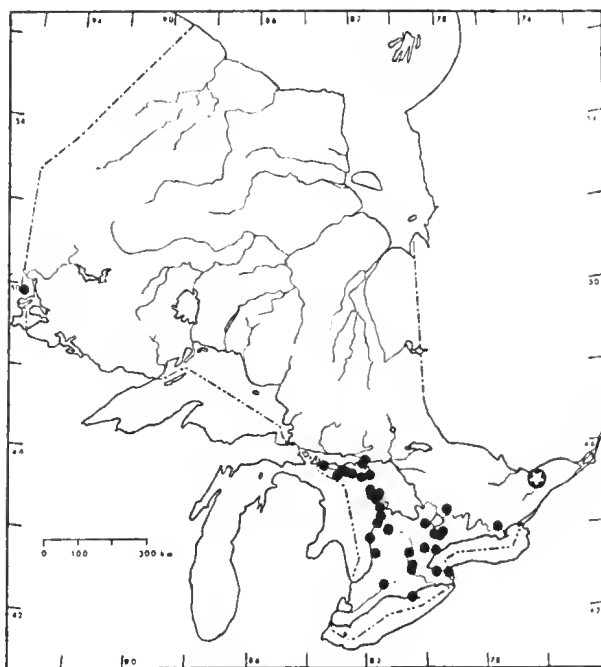
★ Albion Road Wetlands

Figure 8a. Distribution of Arrow Grass (*Triglochin palustris*) in Ontario based on specimens from CAN, DAO, HAM, MTMG, OAC, QK, UWO (herbarium acronyms follow Holmgren et al. (1981)).

also present. These include Slashed Avenas (*Geum laciniatum*), Elliptic Spike-rush (*Eleocharis elliptica*) and Northern Honeysuckle (*Lonicera villosa*).

The fen is defined by a network of open areas and low treed hummocks surrounded by Larch or Cedar-Larch woodland (Figure 9). The glades are predominantly carpeted with herbaceous plants, although in places the ground cover is minimal or even non-existent.

Some plants such as Bog Goldenrod (*Solidago uliginosa*), Cattail (*Typha latifolia*), Blue Violet (*Viola sororia*), White Beak-rush (*Rhynchospora alba*), Hudsonian Club-rush (*Scirpus hudsonianus*), Pitcher-plant (*Sarracenia purpurea*), Agglomerated Muhlenbergia (*Muhlenbergia glomerata*), Marsh Valerian and several sedges are widespread, whereas Twig-rush (*Cladium mariscoides*), Arrow Grass and White Camas are more restricted in their distribution. White Camas, for example, has been noted only south of the ditch.

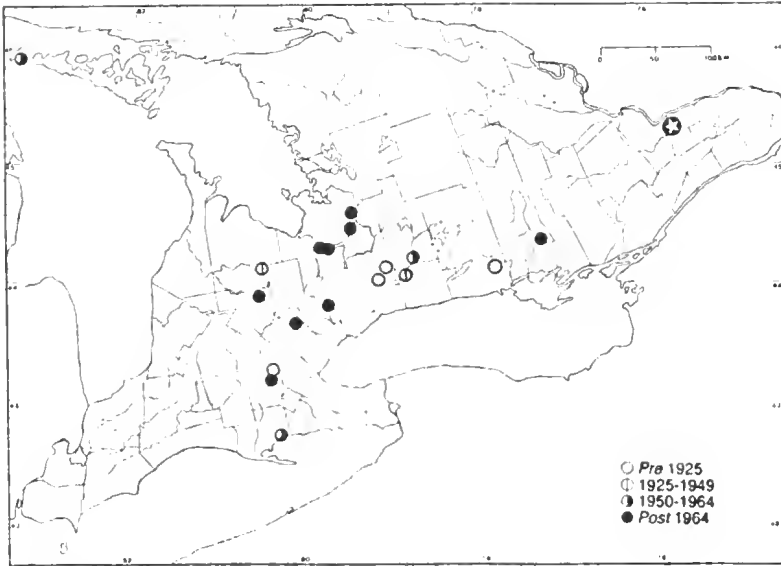


★ Albion Road Wetlands

Figure 8b. Distribution of White Camas (*Zygadenus glaucus*) in Ontario modified and updated from map prepared by Dr. James H. Soper, National Museum of Natural Sciences, based on specimens from CAN, DAO, MTMG, OAC, QK, TRT, TRTE, UWO, WAT (herbarium acronyms follow Holmgren et al. (1981)).

The treed hummocks are dominated by Eastern White Cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*), Larch (*Larix laricina*) and Black Spruce (*Picea mariana*). Small in stature (3 to 6 m), these trees are, according to the more than 40 growth rings, much older than their appearance suggests. A variety of shrubby and herbaceous plants such as Labrador Tea (*Ledum groenlandicum*), Hoary Willow (*Salix candida*), Swamp Honeysuckle (*Lonicera oblongifolia*), Small Cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccos*), Twinflower (*Linnaea borealis*) and assorted mosses obscure the ground.

Towards the fen's edges, the open areas decrease and the hummocks gradually become confluent, eventually merging into the surrounding coniferous woodlands.



★ Albion Road Wetlands

Figure 8c. Distribution of Marsh Valerian (*Valeriana sitchensis* ssp. *uliginosa*) in Ontario updated from map in Argus et al. (1987) based on specimens from AAR, CAN, DAO, LKHD, MTMG, OAC, PWB, QK, TRT, TRTE, WAT (herbarium acronyms follow Holmgren et al. (1981)).

Ancient Cedar Woods

Splendid virgin cedar trees approximately 200 years old dominate this extraordinary community covering several hectares. About two dozen large White Pine (*Pinus strobus*), some exceeding a metre in diameter, grow along and within the periphery. Towering above the forest canopy, these pines are visible from Highway 31. Bordering the southwestern edge is a tiny stand of aged Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), some 0.6 m in diameter. How these trees survived the axe is a mystery. Inaccessibility was probably the major factor, as two streamlets traverse this area of saturated soil.

The profound beauty of this woods continues to amaze me (Figures 10 to 13). The compelling primeval landscape will enthrall both naturalist and photographer. Only the screaming descent of jets to the adjacent airport and the drone of traffic penetrating this graceful wilderness jolt one back to urban reality.

Many of the ancient trees are tilted, some at precarious angles, and provide a dramatic effect. Deadfalls abound and, depending on the extent of decay, furnish a substrate for assorted mosses and vascular plants. The terrain is varied — hummocky in places, fairly flat in others, and, elsewhere, modified by beaver.



Figure 9. View across the fen to the Larch and Larch – Cedar woodland. Two treed hummocks are near the foreground.

Most of the substrate is wet, and in some sections I have had to exercise caution to avoid losing my rubber boots in the water-clogged, unstable peat. Two low beaver dams have modified the centre of the community and have drowned some old trees and created ponds. When I first ventured into these woods about a decade ago, there were no beaver. Undoubtedly, their population explosion forced these rodents to enter areas they normally avoid to search for food.

In the cool, moist, shady woodland, mosses and liverworts flourish, colouring much of the substrate in subtle shades of green. Where wet, peaty soil is evident, it often supports dense growths of Touch-me-nots (*Impatiens capensis*) and beggarticks (*Bidens* spp.). Narrow-leaved Willow-herb (*Epilobium leptophyllum*) and Purple-leaved Willow-herb (*Epilobium coloratum*) also prefer this type of habitat. The delicate fronds of Cinnamon Fern (*Osmunda cinnamomea*), Marsh Fern (*Thelypteris palustris*), Lady Fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*), Evergreen Wood Fern (*Dryopteris intermedia*), Spinulose Wood Fern (*Dryopteris carthusiana*), Maidenhair Fern (*Adiantum pedatum*) and Bulblet Fern (*Cystopteris bulbifera*) add an airy quality to the herbaceous layer.

Small creeping vascular plants, such as Dwarf Raspberry (*Rubus pubescens*), Twinflower, Partridge-berry (*Mitchella repens*), and Naked Mitrewort (*Mitella nuda*), are scattered throughout. Among the many other herbaceous plants are



Figure 10. Martha Camfield admiring an enormous Eastern White Cedar in the ancient cedar woods.

such significant species as Drooping Woodreed (*Cinna latifolia*), Whorled Wood Aster (*Aster acuminatus*), Dwarf Grape Fern (*Botrychium simplex*), Spikenard (*Aralia racemosa*) and Blue Lettuce (*Lactuca biennis*).

Mountain Maple (*Acer spicatum*) and Black Buckthorn (*Rhamnus frangula*) dominate the shrub layer. Other shrubby species include Alder-leaved Buckthorn (*Rhamnus alnifolia*), Swamp Currant (*Ribes lacustre*), Common Elder (*Sambucus canadensis*) and Canada Yew (*Taxus canadensis*). An unusually tall (12 m) specimen of Striped Maple (*Acer pensylvanicum*) thrives along the southwestern edge of the cedar woodland.

DISCUSSION – SAVING THE WETLANDS

Our botanical studies to date indicate that the Albion Road Wetlands are regionally and provincially significant. It is undoubtedly one of the more important wetland complexes in the Ottawa District, but more biological studies are required for an exact rating.

Due to the hazard land designation used by the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton, no serious threat existed to this wetland until May 1988, when Regional Council, unknown to me or other members of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club, began the process of changing the zoning of this to part of the



Figure 11. Martha Camfield embracing an old White Pine in the ancient cedar woods.

Leitrim urban area. In May 1989 Gloucester made public its Leitrim community concept plan, Leitrim Official Plan Amendment No. 10. This document envisages a) large peripheral drains around the wetlands to capture the water supply, b) connecting Blais Road and Armstrong Road, and c) destroying over half of the wetlands east of Albion Road for a subdivision. If executed, this plan would ultimately obliterate the wetlands.

Shortly after Gloucester disclosed its development plans, I wrote to both the City of Gloucester and the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton Planning Commissioner pointing out that a) no serious environmental impact study or biological inventory had been conducted, b) the area contained at least 38 species of regionally significant plants and several unusual plant communities including a stand of virgin cedar trees, and c) this was a wetland underlain by organic soil and its destruction would affect the flow of water into Findley Creek.

The following excerpt from the Planning Commissioner's reply illustrates the lack of knowledge of the wetlands at that time:

During the course of preparing the development concept plan for Leitrim, the physical attributes of the area were examined. Components of this examination included soils analysis and extensive engineering work related to sewers, water, and stormwater manage-



Figure 12. Bryophytes (mosses and liverworts) carpeting the floor of the ancient cedar woods.

ment. The results of this examination have suggested that development of the proposed Leitrim area will not pose any serious adverse impacts on the environment. These same results have been reviewed by the Ministries of the Environment (MOE) and Natural Resources (MNR) as well as the South Nation River Conservation Authority (SNRCA) and no insurmountable problems have emerged thus far.

In response to your question concerning the Region's new Official Plan, Schedule G shows a portion of the proposed Leitrim urban area as having organic soils. The Region's new Official Plan policies on organic soils (Section 7.2.2) permits development in areas identified as having organic soils if there is sufficient soils and engineering information that indicates the area can be made suitable for development.

The Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton forwarded copies of my continued correspondence to the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Natural Resources and the South Nation River Conservation Authority.

No response was ever received from the City of Gloucester. Later, the discovery of White Camas prompted me to solicit the assistance of the Ottawa Field-



Figure 13. Ancient cedar woods showing deadfalls, tilted trees and ground cover.

Naturalists' Club in safe-guarding the wetlands. The club responded positively and sent a letter to the Ministry of Natural Resources expressing its concern.

In addition to the ongoing correspondence, Dr. Joyce Reddoch made many pertinent telephone inquiries. In early November 1989, these efforts culminated in the Ministry of Natural Resources' contracting a qualified professional, Vivian Brownell Catling, to undertake an environmental assessment of the lands in question (botanical information collected by members of the Botany Division, National Museum of Natural Sciences, was used in this appraisal).

During a meeting on November 21, 1989, called by the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton to resolve my objections, it was announced that as a result of the environmental assessment the Albion Road Wetlands qualify as a "Class 1 wetland of provincial significance." After this announcement, representatives of the South Nation River Conservation Authority stated they would object to Gloucester's development plan if the Ministry of Natural Resources would officially recognize the Albion Road Wetlands as a Class 1 wetland.

In a follow-up letter to the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton dated November 30, 1989, the Ministry of Natural Resources stated,

Based on information brought to our attention recently, an inventory of the wetland affected by Official Plan Amendment #10 was

carried out. The assessment of this wetland (using "An Evaluation System for Wetlands of Ontario") indicates it is a Class I wetland of provincial significance. This was discussed with Regional planning staff and others at the November 21, 1989 meeting.

Considering the wetland classification work just completed and noting that the development proposed would have an adverse effect on the wetland, we must now object to Official Plan Amendment #10 (Leitrim). Our objection would be withdrawn however, if the wetland is deleted from the area covered by the Official Plan Amendment.

(This means that Gloucester's development plan, Official Plan Amendment No. 10, should be able to proceed with Ministry of Natural Resources approval only if the wetland is excluded from the area covered by the Official Plan Amendment.)

However, we must not assume that the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton or the Ministry of Natural Resources will automatically fulfil their obligations to protect a significant wetland. In a letter to the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton dated January 23, 1990, the Ministry of Natural Resources appears to have abdicated its responsibility to defend the wetland ("our objection to the amendment as it affects the wetland area will not be pursued to the Ontario Municipal Board") and appears to be concerned only with that part of the wetlands outside the area covered by Official Plan Amendment No. 10. It is uncertain what will happen next. Further developments will be reported in part 2 of this series.

Acknowledgements: I am grateful to members of the Botany Division, National Museum of Natural Sciences, for collecting, identifying and rating the specimens of the following plant groups: bryophytes — Dr. Robert R. Ireland and Linda M. Ley; lichens — Pak Y. Wong; algae — Paul Hamilton. I am thankful to Martha Camfield and other naturalists for help in the field. I am also thankful to Dr. Joyce Reddoch for her helpful comments.

Voucher specimens of the vascular plants, bryophytes, lichens and algae collected during this study have been deposited in the National Herbarium of Canada, Ottawa.

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If you are interested in learning more about the Albion Road Wetlands, join Albert Dugal on a walk through the wetlands on Saturday, June 16, 1990. Please refer to the Coming Events section for more details.

Trail & Landscape Circulation

Circulation of the January – March issue was as follows: a total of 1,109 copies was mailed, 1,084 of them to members, subscribing libraries and other institutions in Canada. Twenty-five copies were sent outside Canada, 20 of them to the United States.

Michael Murphy,
Mailing Team Co-ordinator

Surrender Your Natural History Photos!

The OFNC Education and Publicity Committee needs your help! If you have any favourite good photographs of natural history subjects you would like to contribute for use in our public display, please contact us right away. Just call Deirdre Furlong at 728-4582 for further details. Thanks!

Fall Bird Sightings

Tony Beck

August – November Period

The pleasure of bird watching has become increasingly popular and may now be considered fashionable. It is a pastime whose time has come. If you look at a global map, the Ottawa District may not appear special from a birding perspective, but nothing could be further from the truth. Ottawa is blessed with diverse and contrasting habitats bisected by a mighty river ideally suited to avian navigators. Neither is Ottawa a stranger to birding excitement. Its impressive list of 328 species contains several outstanding national records. This potential for natural thrills is a major driving force in many local birders, and it is their efforts that make this article possible. Although the fall of 1989 may not have generated any earth-shattering bird alerts, it did have several highlights among periods of varying activity.

The most significant sightings were of not one but two separate records of Tufted Titmouse, the third and fourth for the district. On October 28, 1989, one was seen flitting through the scrubby brush of Britannia woods, and around mid-November one began frequenting a feeder on Hilson Avenue. Also high on the interest scale was a Yellow-throated Warbler, which was picking ground suet from a feeder beside the Rideau River in Manotick. It appeared November 21st but, unlike the hardier titmouse, it did not return after a long, hard cold snap. Its last day was December 9th. This is the second record of a Yellow-throated Warbler for Manotick, the fifth fall record for the district, the sixth fall record for eastern Ontario, and the seventh record total for the district. Are these all flukes or is a pattern developing?

Less significant, but equally interesting, were sightings of Parasitic Jaegers harassing gulls along the Ottawa River at Gatineau and a Willet by the river near Masson. Both sightings were the result of the OFNC Fall Bird Count held on August 27th. The Parasitic Jaeger can be considered an early fall record and the Willet is Ottawa's third fall record. Another splendid sighting was of a predictable and co-operative Great Egret, which spent a good portion of the fall by the beaver ponds at the end of Legget Drive. The egret was first reported August 21st and may have stayed well into October.

The greatest disappointment was probably the abandonment of the traditional swallow roost at Pembroke. (Pembroke is outside the 50-km radius of the Ottawa District.) During peak times the displays of over 100,000 swallows of all six eastern species were truly awe-inspiring, but in 1989 there were barely 6,000 birds. For several days there was a concentration of swallows roosting near a cottage area in Westmeath, but these birds did not linger. Where did the

swallows go? They had to be out there somewhere! The development of a roost somewhere inside the Ottawa District is feasible and it will be interesting to see how things develop in the fall.

The fall of 1989 can be remembered best for its extreme weather. Cold northern winds intersected with unseasonably hot and muggy low pressure from the south. For the most part migration was slow and steady with only occasional bursts of activity. August migration started slowly but movement became apparent around the 21st with 12 species of shorebird at Richmond Sewage Lagoons and much warbler activity throughout the Quebec countryside. Healthy numbers of passerines were not reported from the Ontario side until a few days later. By the OFNC Fall Bird Count on August 27th, movement was readily apparent.

As September got under way, duck and gull numbers began gradually to increase along the Ottawa River, particularly between Shirleys Bay and Deschênes Rapids. Water levels fluctuated but remained very low and exposed extensive feeding areas and convenient roosting spots. As the warbler numbers decreased, sparrows, kinglets and thrushes filled the void. By mid-October the Ottawa River was buzzing with activity. Waterfowl numbers were very high and late fall migrants were beginning to show up. Surprisingly, hot weather did not seem to deter the southward migration. November winds carried an icy punch but bird numbers remained high along the frozen edge of the Ottawa River. With early snows came the remaining migrants. Birding became extremely uncomfortable (and less rewarding) as habitats froze over and bird numbers decreased. The hardy, deep northern breeders were still passing through, but a long, cold winter was unfolding.

Red-throated Loons were seen in small numbers in November with five at Shirleys Bay on the 17th and six at Lac Deschênes on the 26th. A single bird was reported off Grandview Drive on November 21st. Red-necked and Horned grebes were found along the Ottawa River in small, loosely knit groups, especially in October, with a high count of 22 Red-necked Grebes on October 15th. On August 9th a second-year Double-crested Cormorant was observed struggling to swallow an eel at least two thirds its own length. After a half-hour battle, the cormorant regurgitated its prey and left the scene to look for easier pickings. On September 22nd a record high count of 138 Double-crested Cormorants were found at Shirleys Bay.

Throughout the fall several Black-crowned Night-Herons became highly visible during twilight around ponds and bays of the Ottawa District. An impressive flock of 38 Tundra Swans was reported flying over Mont Bleu in Hull on November 18th, while a few large flocks of Snow Geese passed through the area as well — 17 at Ottawa Beach on October 10th and 50 at Shirleys Bay on October 22nd. A lone Blue Goose kept company with the multitude of Canada Geese at Ottawa Beach during November. Brant began to come through around October

21st, and a single Brant, like the Blue Goose, remained at Ottawa Beach for a good part of November. Record numbers of Gadwall and Northern Shovelers were noted on October 20th at Shirleys Bay. Two hundred and ten Gadwall were present, while a whopping 425 shovelers made an appearance.

The reliable male Eurasian Wigeon showed up at Mud Lake again; however, it did elude the Fall Bird Count and Seedathon participants by periodically moving to the north shore of the Ottawa River. Individual Canvasbacks were found at various areas and times but most noteworthy was a count of 33 birds at Shirleys Bay on November 17th. A single Redhead made friends with the puddle ducks at a pond off Armstrong Road. The Redhead was intermittently present between mid-September and October. In October and November all three scoter species were present in small numbers along the rivers. A colourful flock of 100 male Black Scoters was seen at Constance Bay on October 15th. On November 17th a noteworthy flock of 120 Oldsquaw was seen at Shirleys Bay, while male Barrow's Goldeneye made appearances October 22nd off Dick Bell Park, November 4th and 26th off Bate Island, and November 17th at Shirleys Bay. By mid-October all three merganser species were easily found along the Ottawa River. The 100+ Hooded Mergansers lingering at Mud Lake during the later part of October were a pleasant sight to see.

Turkey Vultures are almost not worth mentioning anymore; however, a late adult seen November 19th at a snowy Nepean Dump may be worth a note. Bald Eagles were seen around the Shirleys Bay area regularly. An immature bird was observed on September 24th and November 11th and 19th. An adult was seen there on November 21st. Golden Eagles are not as scarce as they used to be. Reports came in from the Cook Road Dump on October 29th and two birds were flying over Britannia on November 5th. Merlins were seen quite regularly. Almost all reports were of birds chasing or catching prey.

There were at least two Peregrine Falcons in the area. One *tundrius* and one *anatum* subspecies were observed on the Fall Bird Count and both were seen regularly on the Coates Building, but never together. American Coots seem to like Shirleys Bay; 61 were recorded there on October 17th and 71 on November 17th. A Sandhill Crane made an appearance just north of Bearbrook Road on September 24th.

Shorebird movement through the district was strong and consistent, with the Willet being the highlight. A Whimbrel was present at Ottawa Beach on August 26th, while Hudsonian Godwits were cropping up all over the place, one as late as November 4th at Ottawa Beach, and a very late, very rare individual for the Outaouais at Dome Hill Golf Course north of Hull. The bird was discovered November 7th and stayed for about two weeks. White-rumped Sandpipers were common, with a record high of 350 birds spread out along the shores of the Ottawa River on October 19th. A late individual was seen on November 19th. Many individuals and small groups of Baird's Sandpiper were present throughout August and September at various locations in the district.

An early Purple Sandpiper showed up by Deschênes Rapids on October 11th and a Buff-breasted Sandpiper was poking around Shirleys Bay September 12th. Stilt Sandpipers were seen several times at Shirleys Bay in August and at Richmond Sewage Lagoon on October 3rd.

Short-billed Dowitchers passed through in expected numbers but three sightings of Long-billed Dowitchers, September 22nd and October 9th at Shirleys Bay and October 2nd at Richmond Sewage Lagoon, are all worthy of mention. Please note that this species has yet to be discovered in the Outaouais. Red-necked and Wilson's phalaropes were seen somewhat steadily during August and September with 22 Red-necked Phalaropes counted at Shirleys Bay on August 20th.

Gulls, gulls and more gulls. If you've seen one gull you've seen them all, right? Not on your life! Deschênes Rapids, the Central Experimental Farm and Nepean Dump were favourite spots for bird and birder alike. The trick was to find the needle in the haystack — the Lesser Black-backed Gull among the thousands of Ring-billed and Herring gulls and hundreds of Greater Black-backed Gulls. There were as many as 12 different Lesser Black-backed Gulls documented in October, while single reports came in throughout the fall.

Iceland and Glaucous gulls started coming in around the end of October and a Thayer's Gull was seen October 24th at Britannia. First-year Franklin's Gulls were seen on September 10th at Britannia and October 4th at Ottawa Beach. An immature Sabine's Gull was reported at Shirleys Bay on September 17th. Ottawa Beach played host to two Caspian Terns on September 29th.

A Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was seen on top of a Jack Pine on the Jack Pine Trail during the Fall Bird Count (August 27th). Gray Jays were found near Meech Lake on October 26th and several times thereafter. Ravens seem to be spreading into the west end with several sightings at the Jack Pine Trail and a fly by at Dick Bell Park. A deceased Boreal Chickadee was found on a downtown sidewalk on October 22nd. Bohemian Waxwings started showing up in mid-October. By November they were being seen everywhere. A flock of 350 at Britannia on November 19th was a fairly hefty one.

A late Solitary Vireo spotted November 7th off the Parkway near the Champlain Bridge can be considered interesting, while a very late Northern Parula seen November 4th is highly unusual. Two Prothonotary Warblers were reported together near Poltimore on August 20th. An extremely late female Indigo Bunting found at Britannia on October 29th must have been a startling sight. Lots of Fox Sparrows were seen during October but a few were passing through in early November with two separate reports from the Jack Pine Trail on November 5th and 7th as well as a bird showing up at a feeder near Russell around the same time. Finally, Lapland Longspurs were seen with some frequency this fall, usually mixed in with a flock of Snow Buntings or Horned Larks.

Acknowledgements: I would like to thank Daniel St. Hilaire and Gordon Pringle. I would also like to extend a special thank you to Bruce Di Labio and an extra special thank you to Larry Neily, his assistants and all those who called the Bird Status Line.

Coming Events

arranged by the Excursions and Lectures Committee

For further information,
call the club number (722-3050).

Times stated for excursions are departure times. Please arrive earlier; leaders start promptly. If you need a ride, don't hesitate to ask the leader. Restricted trips will be open to non-members only after the indicated deadlines.

ALL OUTINGS: Please bring a lunch on full-day trips and dress according to the weather forecast and the activity. Binoculars and/or spotting scopes are essential on all birding trips. Unless otherwise stated, transportation will be by car pool.

REGISTERED BUS TRIPS: Make your reservation for club bus excursions by sending a cheque or money order (payable to the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club) to Ellaine Dickson, 2037 Honeywell Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K2A 0P7, at least ten days in advance. Include your name, address, telephone number and the name of the outing.

EVENTS AT THE MUSEUM: Club members must show their membership cards to gain access to the National Museum of Natural Sciences for club functions after regular museum hours. There is a charge for parking in the museum lot.

Sunday
1 April
6:30 a.m.
to
6:30 p.m.

BUS EXCURSION: SPRING BIRDING AT PRESQU'ILE

Leaders: Bob Bracken and Colin Gaskell

Meet: Sears, Carlingwood Shopping Centre, south side,
Carling Avenue at Woodroffe Avenue

Cost: \$20.00 (see Registered Bus Trips for details)

This is the club's annual trip to observe the large flocks of waterfowl that pause to rest and feed in the waters surrounding the provincial park during the course of their northward migration.

Tuesday
10 April
8:00 p.m.

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING SPRING WILDFLOWERS

Speaker: Erich Haber

Meet: Auditorium, National Museum of Natural
Sciences, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets

Don't miss Erich's illustrated talk on the ever popular sub-
ject of spring wildflowers.

Saturday
21 April
9:00 a.m.

TREES IN SPRING

Leader: Ellaine Dickson

Meet: Sears, Carlingwood Shopping Centre, south side,
Carling Avenue at Woodroffe Avenue

Bring a snack, a hand lens and waterproof footwear for this
half-day outing on the Jack Pine Trail.

Sunday
22 April
6:30 a.m.
to
6:30 p.m.

BUS EXCURSION: HAWK MIGRATION AT DERBY HILL, N.Y.

Leaders: Bob Bracken and Bernie Ladouceur

Meet: Sears, Carlingwood Shopping Centre, south side,
Carling Avenue at Woodroffe Avenue

Cost: \$25.00 (see Registered Bus Trips for details)

When weather conditions are favourable, the spectacle of
thousands of hawks migrating through Derby Hill is well
worth the bus ride. Please bring proof of citizenship for
entry into the United States. Optical equipment in "new"
condition should be registered with Canada Customs in ad-
vance of the trip. The trip will be cancelled on the day
before if the weather forecast for the eastern end of Lake
Ontario is particularly unfavourable. You will be notified of
any change of plan.

Friday
27 April
7:30 p.m.

OFNC SOIREE - WINE AND CHEESE PARTY

Meet: Unitarian Church Hall, 30 Cleary Street

See the centrefold in the previous (January - March 1990)
issue for further details.

Bird Walks for Beginners

The following series of walks (of three or four hours duration) is offered for
novice birders.

Saturday	Time	Place	Leader
5 May	7:30 a.m.	Britannia*	Don Davidson
12 May	7:30 a.m.	Britannia*	Jim Harris
26 May	7:30 a.m.	Britannia*	Tony Beck

*Entrance to the Britannia Filtration Plant; bus #18 stops here.

May Evening Strolls

These four informal walks are offered to expand members' general knowledge of local natural history. Children are most welcome on these outings. Waterproof footwear is advisable.

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Thursday | SOUTH MARCH HIGHLANDS |
| 3 May | Leader: Ellaine Dickson (722-3050 after 10 a.m.) |
| 6:30 p.m. | Meet: Lincoln Heights Galleria, northeast corner of the parking lot, Richmond Road and Assaly Road |
| Wednesday | NEW YORK CENTRAL RIGHT-OF-WAY |
| 9 May | Leader: Sheila Thomson |
| 6:30 p.m. | Meet: Elmvale Shopping Centre, northeast corner of the parking lot, St. Laurent Boulevard and Smyth Road |
| Wednesday | STONY SWAMP — TRAIL NO. 5 |
| 16 May | Leader: Bill Gummer |
| 6:30 p.m. | Meet: Lincoln Heights Galleria (see above) |
| Tuesday | STONY SWAMP |
| 29 May | Leader: Ken Taylor |
| 6:30 p.m. | Meet: Lincoln Heights Galleria (see above) |
| | |
| Tuesday | OFNC MONTHLY MEETING |
| 8 May | WILDLIFE OF THE BRAZILIAN PANTANAL |
| 7:30 p.m. | Speaker: Ray Knowles |
| | Meet: Auditorium, National Museum of Natural Sciences, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets |
| | The Pantanal, in southwestern Brazil, is an area of savannah that is regularly flooded. It is noted for its striking natural beauty and its rich wildlife. Ray will speak on the birds, animals and reptiles that inhabit this interesting area. A wine and cheese party hosted by the Brazilian Embassy will follow in the newly redecorated foyer of the museum from 8:30 to 10:00 p.m. Please note the early start time. |
| | |
| Saturday & Sunday | SPRING WEEKEND IN THE MADAWASKA HILLS |
| 12 & 13 May | Leaders: Harry and Sheila Thomson (234-0845) |
| | This weekend tent-out on the Thomsons' property on Mount St. Patrick will provide participants with an opportunity to experience the sounds of nature at dawn. Contact the leaders by Wednesday, May 9, for directions and briefing. |

Sunday
27 May
8:00 a.m.

**GENERAL INTEREST WALK — VINCE'S ROAD -
DUNROBIN AREA**

Leader: Ellaine Dickson (722-3050 after 10 a.m.)

Meet: Lincoln Heights Galleria, northeast corner of the
parking lot, Richmond Road and Assaly Road

On this long half-day outing we will be exploring a new trail
and looking at some sand-loving plants. Bring a drink and a
snack.

Sunday
27 May

SPRING BIRD COUNT

Compiler: Larry Neily (820-0013)

Participate in the annual count of the spring bird popula-
tion within the Ottawa District (a 50-km radius of
Parliament Hill). For details, telephone the compiler or the
club number at 722-3050 after 10 a.m.

Monday
28 May
7:00 a.m.

MID-WEEK BIRDING

Leaders: The Monday Breakfast and Birding Group

Meet: Lincoln Heights Galleria, northeast corner of the
parking lot, Richmond Road and Assaly Road

Sunday
3 June
8:00 a.m.

MOTORCADE TOUR OF A BLUEBIRD TRAIL

Leader: Carson Thompson (1-267-5721)

Meet: Sears, Carlingwood Shopping Centre, Carling
Avenue at Woodroffe Avenue

Participants will drive to the Perth Wildlife Reserve (road
signs can be picked up on the Rideau Ferry Road off High-
way 43 between Perth and Smiths Falls). After we follow
the Bluebird Trail, lunch (bring your own) will be at the
Millpond Conservation Area. Carson is the manager of the
Perth Wildlife Reserve.

Wednesday
6 June
8:30 a.m.

**MID-WEEK OUTING TO BILL'S FARMLAND AT
BURRITT'S RAPIDS**

Leader: Bill Gummer (596-1148)

Meet: Sears, Carlingwood Shopping Centre, Carling
Avenue at Woodroffe Avenue

This will be a general interest walk to see various species of
birds and wildflowers. Pack a picnic lunch and binoculars
for this leisurely trip.

Sunday
10 June
8:00 a.m.
to
8:00 p.m.

BUS EXCURSION: CHAFFEY'S LOCKS

Leaders: Roger Taylor and Peter Hall

Meet: Sears, Carlingwood Shopping Centre, Carling
Avenue and Woodroffe Avenue

Cost: \$20.00 (see Registered Bus Trips for details)

This all-day general interest trip in the Rideau Lakes district is one of our most popular outings. The area represents a transition zone where many southern species of plants and animals reach their northern limit. We will explore various hiking trails at the Skycroft Outdoor Centre and the Queen's University Biological Station. The charge of \$20.00 will cover the bus fare, use of the Skycroft facilities and the dinner provided by the Biological Station. Remember to bring a lunch and bathing suit. Please support the club by taking the bus. If you do go by private car, you must register for the dinner (\$10.00 in advance).

Date and time
to be decided

PURDON FEN

Leaders: Robina Bennett (829-0958) and Catherine
O'Keefe (745-4441)

Meet: Lincoln Heights Galleria, northeast corner of the
parking lot at Richmond Road and Assaly Road

This is an opportunity to see the spectacular display of Showy Lady-slippers. The date of the excursion depends on when the flowers are in bloom. If you are interested in participating, please leave your name and telephone number with one of the leaders before June 10th. You will be notified of the date and time. For more information about Purdon Fen see David White's article on page 44 of the April - June 1988 issue of *Trail & Landscape*.

Tuesday
12 June
8:00 p.m.

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING

OFNC VISITS AUSTRALIA

Speaker: Roger Taylor

Meet: Auditorium, National Museum of Natural Sciences,
Metcalf and McLeod Streets

Over the past six years Roger Taylor has organized and led three trips to Australia. These were natural history tours emphasizing birds. He is now planning trip number four for a four-week period in the fall of 1991 - springtime in Australia.

Wednesday
13 June
9:00 a.m.

MID-WEEK TRIP TO MARY STUART'S PROPERTY

Leader: Mary Stuart (820-5220)

Meet: Lincoln Heights Galleria, northeast corner of the parking lot, Richmond Road and Assaly Road

On the way to Mary's abandoned farmland near Pakenham we will make one or two stops at points of interest, including Blakeney. At the farm we will ramble about seeing what we can find. Bring something to drink (there is no drinking water), a lunch, waterproof footwear, insect repellent and binoculars. Call Mary the day before for any last-minute instructions.

Saturday
16 June
8:30 a.m.

ALBION ROAD WETLANDS

Leader: Albert Dugal

Meet: K-mart, Blossom Park, southeast corner of the parking lot, Queensdale at Highway 31

This half-day outing will include a walk through a Larch woodland and fen complex threatened by development. Three species of vascular plants new to the Ottawa District — White Camas, Arrow Grass and the provincially rare Marsh Valerian — have been discovered here. Other fen species, such as Pitcher-plant, are present as well. Rubber boots and insect repellent are recommended. (Please see "Albion Road Wetlands Part 1" by Albert Dugal in this issue for more information on the wetlands.)

Sunday
17 June
1:00 p.m.

THE BURNT LANDS ALVAR

Leader: David White (1-259-3135)

Meet: Sears, Carlingwood Shopping Centre, Carling Avenue at Woodroffe Avenue

Alvars are open limestone plains that have remained virtually unchanged for thousands of years. The Burnt Lands Alvar is a provincially significant natural area that supports a variety of unusual and interesting plant species. Wear sturdy boots. Beware — certain areas are infested with Poison Ivy.

Sunday
24 June
1:00 p.m.

GENERAL BOTANICAL OUTING TO MER BLEUE

Leader: Bill Arthurs (225-6941)

Meet: Elmvale Shopping Centre, northeast corner of the parking lot, St. Laurent Boulevard and Smyth Road

This will be a general botanical outing with emphasis on ferns and club mosses. Twelve to fourteen genera of ferns, as well as a few species of club mosses, may be seen. We will not be going into any boggy areas.

- Wednesday
4 July
10:00 a.m.
to
3:00 p.m.
- MID-WEEK OUTING TO THE MER BLEUE
BOARDWALK**
Leader: Fenja Brodo
Meet: Elmvale Shopping Centre, northeast corner of the
parking lot, St. Laurent Boulevard and Smyth Road
This will be a general interest walk with some focus on in-
sects that live in and around water. Bring a lunch and a
drink.
- Sunday
8 July
9:30 a.m.
- BUTTERFLY HABITATS**
Leader: Peter Hall (733-0698)
Meet: Neatby Building, front entrance, Central
Experimental Farm, one block west of the Irving Place
– Maple Lane stop light on Carling Avenue
This all-day outing will provide an opportunity to observe
butterflies in several different habitats and to examine their
close relationship with various species of plants essential to
particular stages of their life cycle. Bring a lunch and a but-
terfly net if you have one.
- Sunday
29 July
7:00 a.m.
- BIRDING TOUR OF THE EASTERN SEWAGE
LAGOONS**
Leader: Bruce Di Labio
Meet: Elmvale Shopping Centre, northeast corner of the
parking lot, St. Laurent Boulevard and Smyth Road
Participants will visit several sewage lagoons east of Ottawa
to observe migrating shorebirds and interesting species of
breeding waterfowl.

DEADLINE: The deadline for the July – September issue was April 1; material intended for this issue should already be in the Editor's hands. If you have material for this issue, please give me a call.

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The GREEN LINE



The environment is now considered to be the primary concern of citizens in Canada and the U.S. Polls conducted by Southam News, Infometrica and others indicate 85% of those surveyed would accept environmental protection measures even if they resulted in loss of jobs (presumably other peoples'). But attitudes expressed in polls don't always translate into votes. Environmentally-friendly politicians and municipal planning staff have personally asked me to go out in public and criticize them! They say they need telephone calls, letters and submissions from their constituents to support policies that protect wildlife and natural areas. The construction industry already has powerful friends on city and regional councils.

However, controversy rising from the golf course on Constance Creek seems to have raised the consciousness of the construction industry. As an example, **Terrace Investments** and the **Ottawa Duck Club** were able

to cooperate to mutual benefit in resolving potential conflict between Terrace's proposed Riddell housing development in Kanata and the Duck Club's duck rearing ponds behind DND's Connaught Rifle Range. Officials from the **Mississippi Conservation Authority**, and the **Ministry of Natural Resources** participated in an informal working group with Terrace and Novatech, their consulting engineers. The Duck Club accepted a settling pond and water control structures to satisfy their concerns about possible water contamination in the ponds. Maybe a new era in corporate sponsorship of the environment is beginning.

Certainly, the number of "round table" negotiations at federal and provincial levels is cause for hope. Government, business and citizens for the environment are talking, at federal, provincial and - recently - municipal levels. In February, participants in a public forum sponsored by the Region and the

Ottawa Board of Education, listed recommendations put forward by working groups that are now being compiled into a "Greenprint" for the Ottawa region. Each workshop, organized around a specific issue, was asked to identify specific actions that should be taken and what body or authority they felt was responsible to react to each recommendation. According to organizer Mary Hegan, the final report from the event will be tabled in late spring with representatives from those authorities and agencies.

A day-long **OFNC** discussion group organized by President Jeff Harrison also met in February and it too will produce a report. Roy John, one of our Vice-Presidents, is busily editing the committee reports and will present a compilation of recommendations to **OFNC Council**. The report, or a condensed version of it, will be available soon.

The News In Brief...

Toronto creates the largest city park in Canada - the Rouge River Valley! **Save the Rouge River System**, a non-profit conservation group, can finally claim victory in a fifteen year battle against urban development in the valley. The municipal councils of Scarborough, Markham, Pickering, and Whitchurch-Stouffville also deserve credit for declaring their unanimous support for the creation of a such a park. An Advisory Committee is soon to be appointed by Lyn McLeod, the Ontario Minister of Natural Resources, to recommend a Management Plan for the first 4000 acres of the Rouge River Valley.

Environment Canada staff members take matters into their own hands. During Winterlude 1990, Ronald Ketcheson and a team of 18 others from the **Conservation and Protection Branch** won the Snow Sculpture competition in the Public Service category. They donated their \$500 prize to a worthy cause - the Alfred Bog fund.

ECOVISION needs you! This new environmental advocacy group, which will foster effective cooperation among existing natural history and environmental organizations

such as the **OFNC**, met for the first time on Saturday, April 21, at the Sandy Hill Community Centre. At this founding meeting, they discussed the new group's objectives and action plan, adopted a constitution and elected a board of directors. For details on how to become involved, call Robin Day at 232-3679 or Andrea Prazmowski at 722-2629.

Help save the Leirtrim Wetland on Albion Road! On April 24th, over strong opposition from local environmental groups including the **Ottawa Field-Naturalists**, the Ottawa-Carleton **Regional Planning Committee** approved an amendment to the Gloucester Official Plan that would permit Tartan Homes to completely replace this Class 1 wetland with housing and commercial development. This rezoning is being referred to the OMB, by the **OFNC** and other groups. Thanks in particular to **OFNC** members Albert Dugal and Joyce Reddoch, we now know this area is rich botanically and contains more than 40 regionally-significant plants. There are more to be discovered, as the area has yet to be completely botanised. Less still is known of the wetland's fauna. Anyone with information about bird, fish or mammals in this area, located between Regional Roads 14 and 8 along Albion Road, should immediately contact Albert Dugal at 821-1236 or Michael Murphy at 727-1739.

The Wildlife Garden: It's a Go

(Conservation Committee)

An agreement in principle has now been reached with **Agriculture Canada** to establish a model wildlife garden at the **Central Experimental Farm**.

The **OFNC**, in collaboration with the very active **Friends of the Central Experimental Farm**, put forward a detailed proposal to turn a prime location in the Arboretum at the Farm into a garden that will show Ottawa residents that wildlife can feel at home in the City - even in their backyards.

Work has already begun on the project. Using money from an **Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources** grant, a landscape architect has been hired. His job is to survey the site, bring together any existing information such as topographical and soil maps and come up with a draft site concept and list of plant materials required for further work. The concept will be developed into a schedule for development over a period of five years.

Under the leadership of professional horticulturists at the **CEF**, volunteers from the **OFNC** and the **Friends of the Farm** will be responsible for site development and maintenance. Club members will have some very particular roles to play. In the first year, an inventory of the existing natural resources of the ravine site will have to be made and a general clean up of the area, with some weeding, started. Club expertise in natural history will also be required in the planning process, including knowledge of birds, wildflowers, insects, general ecology etc. Some initial tree planting and path clearing is also anticipated in the first year.

When the concept of a wildlife garden was first broached several years ago, about 30 Club members volunteered their time to help. All of these volunteers will be contacted directly. In addition, other volunteers are required for any of the following activities: planning, liaison with other interested organizations, garden clearing and maintenance, further fund raising, promotion and public relations, and specific expertise in natural history areas. For further information or to sign up, call the Club number (722-3050 after 10:00 a.m.) and leave your name, telephone number and area of activity in which you are interested.

Following several years of negotiations and disappointments with several public land owners in the City, it's now a green light for the wildlife garden. Let's show residents of Ottawa that wildlife has a place in our city.

The Green Line Is the Bottom Line

by Michael Ross Murphy

Within the City of Ottawa, the **Carson Woods** area (along the Aviation Parkway between Montreal Road and Ogilvy Road) is to be sold by **CMHC** and developed for residential housing, despite wide awareness of the value of the woodland for wildlife and passive recreational uses such as birdwatching, hiking and cross-country skiing.

Meanwhile, a large parcel of land between Clyde Avenue and Merivale Road is to be bulldozed flat to provide affordable housing and a senior's complex of some kind yet to be determined. The **Clyde/Merivale lands**, as they are known, were formerly part of the **Central Experimental Farm**. **Assaly Corporation** and Ottawa-Carleton, the two landowners, are planning a joint development plan for the two separate but adjacent parcels of land.

This happens to be the site of a small mixed forest, well-known to the **Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club** by a variety of names, including "**Quarry Woods**", "**Clyde Woods**", and "**Carlington Woods**" (everybody seems to want to claim it as their own!). The upland portion is a mature maple forest that surrounds the **NCC** bicycle path and it is fortunately outside the area to be developed. However, the white cedar swamp and old field areas designated for medium density residential housing are of even greater interest to our club because of the owl and herpetile habitat. We are also concerned since the lowland area to be developed provides the lifeblood of water to the mature maple forest portion.

Clyde Woods is described in the City's draft official plan as "environmentally sensitive". However, the lowland portion of the woods is now owned by the **T.C. Assaly Corporation** and it is not clear how an "environmentally sensitive" designation of the woodland will affect their plan of development, especially since the Official Plan is a long way from approval by the province. The Region has already "paved the way" for this development by rezoning the land from "Government Functional Area" to "General Urban Area" in its latest Official Plan, although the Minister of Municipal Affairs has agreed to defer approval on this rezoning until **Cumming Cockburn**, a consulting company, completes the public review of their concept plans and technical reports next month. We must act now, and communicate with our city aldermen, particularly those on planning committee.

You can write to:

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